

IN THE UNITED STATES

PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANTS: Justin T. Nguyen et al.
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APPEAL BRIEF

Pursuant to the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 41.37, please consider this document as the Appellants' Brief in the present application currently before the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences (hereinafter "the Board").

I. Real Party in Interest

The subject application is owned by the StarCite, Inc. Assignment from inventors Nguyen, Chang, Chen, and Thackeray to SeeUthere.com, Inc. was recorded on December 28, 2007 at Reel 020302, Frame 0094. Inventors Stankovic and Goodrich cannot be found or reached after diligent effort. Inventor Leong refused to assign his rights to SeeUthere.com. See Petition filed on October 18, 2004. Assignment from SeeUthere.com, Inc. to OnVantage,

Inc. was recorded on November 30, 2006 at Reel 018569, Frame 0541. OnVantage, Inc. subsequently merged into StarCite, Inc.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no known related appeals or interferences that may directly affect, be directly affected by, or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

III. Status of Claims

Claims 1-25 and 52-68 are currently pending in the present application. These claims were rejected in the final Office Action of June 14, 2007 (hereinafter "the Office Action"). Specifically, claims 1-25, 52-68 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,960,406 (hereafter "Rasansky") in view of an article titled "Leukemia Society: Cocktail party to benefit Linsey Smith – 10 year old Leukemia patient" (hereinafter "Leukemia Society"). The Examiner also took official notice in the rejections of claims 6, 8, 10, 14-16, 18, 19, and 64.

The rejection of claims 1-25 and 52-68 is hereby appealed.

IV. Status of Amendments

All claim amendments submitted to the Examiner during prosecution of the present application have been entered. No amendments were proposed subsequent to issuance of the Office Action. The claims involved in the present appeal are presented in Section VIII of this document.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The claimed invention is directed to event planning processes (and corresponding computer program products) that enable users to plan events using web browsers. (See, e.g., Spec. p. 2, lines 26-29). In one embodiment, an event planning server system 11 runs an event planning application 14 to provide comprehensive services related to event planning. (See, e.g., Fig. 1A, Spec. p. 3, lines 5-15, p. 7, line 28-p. 8, line 10). By accessing the event planning server system 11, a user can plan an event, generate and send invitations to invitees, track RSVP status, and verify RSVP payment information. (See, e.g., Fig. 1A, Spec. p. 3, lines 5-15, p. 7, line 28-p. 8, line 1).

Claim 1: With exemplar reference to Figs. 1A and 1C, independent claim 1 recites an event planning process 60 executed by a server system 11 in a computer network 28 including a plurality of user terminals 26 communicatively coupled with the server system 11 via the network 28, the process 60 comprising the steps of: providing 62 an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 10, lines 3-18); receiving 64 event information input by the user, said event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to said scheduled event and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend said scheduled event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 10, lines 19-25); providing 70 an invitation to said invitee, said invitation indicating said scheduled event and said RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to said invitation, wherein an affirmative response to said invitation requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 11, lines 15-25); receiving 72 RSVP status information including payment information from said invitee; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 11, lines 26-28); and verifying said payment information (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 7-15).

Claim 2: With exemplar reference to Figs. 1A and 1C, dependent claim 2 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 as described above. Dependent claim 2 further includes the following limitations: said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes generating at least one event planning Web page that is accessible at the user terminal via the network, said event planning Web page including embedded code for providing said event planning graphical user interface (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 16-19).

Claim 3: With exemplar reference to Figs. 1A and 1C, dependent claim 3 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 as described above, and further comprises generating an invitation Web page based on said event information, said invitation Web page being accessible via the network and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling said invitee to respond to said invitation; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 21-23, p. 11, lines 3-6); sending an invitation message to said invitee, said invitation message prompting said invitee to view said invitation Web page; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 23-25, p. 11, lines 3-7); and receiving input provided by said invitee via said invitation Web page, said input provided by said invitee indicating said RSVP status information (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 25 and 26, p. 11, line 26-p. 12, line 1).

Claim 12: With exemplar reference to Fig. 18, dependent claim 12 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 3 as described above and further includes the following limitations: said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to specify a question for said invitee; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 26, lines 1-5); said event information specifies said question; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 26, lines 5-9); said invitation Web page is further operative to provide invitation response graphical user

interface components enabling said invitee to provide a response to said question; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 4, lines 20-22); and said step of receiving input comprises receiving information indicative of said response (See, e.g., Spec. p. 34, lines 27-28).

Claim 13: With exemplar reference to Fig. 17, dependent claim 13 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 and dependent claims 3 and 12 as described above and further includes the following limitations: said invitation Web page is further operative to enable other invitees to view said response if the user has selected an option of enabling said other invitees to view said response (See, e.g., Spec. p. 25, lines 25-27).

Claim 17: With exemplar reference to Fig. 16, dependent claim 17 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 3 as described above and further includes the following limitations: said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to indicate whether said invitee may forward said invitation to other people (See, e.g., Spec. p. 25, lines 9 and 10).

Claim 20: With exemplar reference to Figs. 7, 25, and 26, dependent claim 20 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 and intervening dependent claim 2 as described above. Dependent claim 20 further includes the following limitations: providing an event summary Web page to the user terminal, the event summary Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 28, lines 16-19, p. 26, lines 13-15); receiving user input from said user via said event summary Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 18, lines 4-6, p. 26, lines 13-15); generating event summary information associated with the selected event, said event summary information comprising RSVP status information associated with each of the

invitees for selected event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 5, lines 7-9); and transmitting said event summary information to said user terminal (See, e.g., Spec. p. 5, lines 7-9).

Claim 21: With exemplar reference to Fig. 1C, dependent claim 21 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 3 as described above and further includes the following limitations: said invitation Web page provides an invitation response graphical user interface enabling said invitee to select “maybe” as a said RSVP status response (See, e.g., Spec. p. 11, lines 19 and 20).

Claim 22: With exemplar reference to Fig. 8, dependent claim 22 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 as described above and further includes the following limitations: said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to specify a maximum number of invitees (See, e.g., Spec. p. 11, lines 2-4).

Claim 23: With exemplar reference to Figs. 5, 6, 29, and 30, dependent claim 23 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 2 as described above and further includes the following limitations: providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 30, lines 25-30); receiving 1124 user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 30, lines 27-30, p. 31, lines 9 and 10); generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information comprising RSVP fee status information associated with each of the invitees for said selected event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 31, lines 10-13); and transmitting said event report information to said user terminal (See, e.g., Spec. p. 31, lines 12-15).

Claim 24: With exemplar reference to Figs. 5, 6, 29, and 30, dependent claim 24 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 and all steps of intervening dependent claim 18: said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to indicate ticket pricing information indicating a price of at least one type of ticket being offered for admission to said scheduled event (See, e.g., Spec. p. 5, lines 1-3), and further comprising a step of determining convenience fees to be paid to administrators of the server system based on sales of said tickets to said invitees (See, e.g., Spec. p. 5, lines 3-6).

Dependent claim 24 further includes the following limitations: providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 30, lines 25-30); receiving 1124 user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 30, lines 27-30, p. 31, lines 9 and 10); generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information comprising RSVP fee status information and convenience fee information associated with said selected event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 31, lines 10-13); and transmitting said event report information to said user terminal (See, e.g., Spec. p. 31, lines 12-15).

Claim 60: With exemplar reference to Figs. 1A and 1C, independent claim 60 recites a computer program product (See, e.g., Spec. p. 7, line 29-p. 8, line 10), the computer program product comprising a computer readable medium (See, e.g., Spec. p. 7, line 29-p. 8, line 10) having stored therein computer-executable instructions (See, e.g., Spec. p. 7, line 29-p. 8, line 10) for performing the steps of: providing 62 an event planning graphical user interface, the interface configured to receive information associated with an event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 10, lines 3-18); receiving 64 event information specifying an event, at least one invitee to be invited to the

event, and RSVP fee information specifying a fee required to attend the event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 10, lines 19-25); electronically storing 66 the event information in a database; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 10, lines 26-30); electronically providing 70 an invitation to the invitee that comprises the event information and RSVP fee information and solicits a response to the invitation, an affirmative response to the invitation requiring a payment responsive to the RSVP fee information; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 11, lines 15-25); electronically receiving 72 a response to the invitation from the invitee comprising payment information; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 11, lines 26-28); and electronically providing the payment information to a payment processing server for verification (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 7-15).

Claim 67: With exemplar reference to Figs. 1A and 1C, dependent claim 67 recites a process that incorporates all steps of independent claim 1 as described above and further includes the following limitations: generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being publicly-accessible via the network to a plurality of viewers comprising the invitee and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the invitee to respond to the invitation (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 20-23); receiving input provided by the invitee via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the invitee indicating the RSVP status information (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 25 and 26).

Claim 68: With exemplar reference to Figs. 1A and 1C, independent claim 68 recites an event planning process 60 executed by a server system 11 in a computer network 28 including a plurality of user terminals 26 communicatively coupled with the server system 11 via the network 28, the process 60 comprising the steps of: providing 62 an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 10, lines 3-18); receiving 64 event information input by the user, the event information

indicating a scheduled event and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend the scheduled event; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 10, lines 19-25); generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being publicly-accessible via the network to a plurality of viewers including a first viewer and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the first viewer to respond to the invitation; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 21-23); receiving input provided by the first viewer via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the first viewer indicating the RSVP status information comprising payment information; (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 25-26); and verifying the payment information (See, e.g., Spec. p. 3, lines 7-15).

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The grounds of rejection presented for review in the instant appeal are as follows:

- 1) Whether claims 1-25 and 52-68 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Rasansky in view of Leukemia Society;
- 2) Whether the rejection of claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67 is proper and whether they are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Rasansky in view of Leukemia Society;
- 3) Whether the rejection of claims 12, 13, 22, and 24 is proper and whether they are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Rasansky in view of Leukemia Society; and
- 4) Whether the official notices used to support the rejection of claims 6, 8, 10, 14-16, 18, 19, and 64 are proper.

VII. Argument

A. Claims 1-25 and 52-68 are patentable over Rasansky in view of Leukemia Society.

To render a claim unpatentable under §103, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must suggest or teach *all* the limitations of the claimed invention. See *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981 (C.C.P.A. 1974); 35 U.S.C. § 103(a); MPEP §§ 706.02(j), 2143.03. If even a single claim limitation is not taught or suggested by the prior art, then that claim cannot be rejected under §103 over the prior art. See *In re Glass*, 472 F.2d 1388, 1392 (C.C.P.A. 1973). The Examiner's rejection of claims 1-25 and 52-68 is improper because the suggested combination of Rasansky and Leukemia Society does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of the rejected claims.

Independent claim 1 recites, inter alia, the following:

providing an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event;
receiving event information input by the user, said event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to said scheduled event and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend said scheduled event;
providing an invitation to said invitee, said invitation indicating said scheduled event and said RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to said invitation, wherein an affirmative response to said invitation requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees;
receiving RSVP status information including payment information from said invitee;
and
verifying said payment information.

Thus, the claimed invention beneficially enables an event planner to require an invitee of a schedule event to make a RSVP fee payment in order to affirmatively respond to an invitation of

the event. The claimed invention also verifies the RSVP fee payments. Independent claims 60 and 68 recite similar features.

Rasansky, among other differences, fails to disclose the limitations discussed above. Rasansky is directed to a system for scheduling events between end users of the system. See Rasansky, Abstract. A user can invite others to an event by posting event information on recipients' calendars. See Rasansky, Abstract. The Examiner acknowledged that Rasansky does not teach "[an] invitation indicating ... RSVP fees, ... wherein an affirmative response to said invitation requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees." See Office Action, p. 3. Appellants submit that Rasansky also fails to disclose the claimed features of "receiving RSVP status information including payment information from said invitee" and verifying the RSVP fee payment information.

Leukemia Society does not remedy the deficiencies of Rasansky. Leukemia Society is merely a press release including an invitation to attend a cocktail party with a note of "Donation: Admission Fee of \$10." The invitation listed a contact name ("Deborah Lee") and a phone number ("415/421-2600"). Therefore, the invitation suggests that people can call the listed phone number to RSVP for the event. However, the invitation does not teach or suggest that an RSVP "requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees." In addition, Leukemia Society does not teach or suggest receiving and verifying RSVP payment information from invitees.

The combination of the Rasansky and Leukemia Society references also fails to disclose or suggest the claimed features discussed above. At best, the combination provides a system and method for scheduling events between end users of a computer system, such that the event description can include donation or admission fee information. The combination does not teach or suggest an event planning process that enables an event planner to provide an invitation to an

invitee based on information provided by the planner, an affirmative response to the invitation requiring a payment of a RSVP fee, and verifies the RSVP fee payment.

Accordingly, Appellants respectfully submit that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not find the elements of independent claims 1, 60, and 68 obvious in view of the cited references. The dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons.

B. Claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67 are patentable over Rasansky in view of Leukemia Society.

The Examiner improperly rejected claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67 by grouping them together with other claims without addressing the distinctive claimed features recited in claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67. See Office Action, p. 3. “A plurality of claims should never be grouped together in a common rejection, unless that rejection is equally applicable to all claims in the group.” MPEP 707.07(d). Each of the claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67 recites unique limitations, and therefore the claims should not be grouped together. Claim 3 recites generating an invitation web page based on event information input by user, and sending an invitation message to an invitee prompting the invitee to view the invitation web page, where the web page enables the invitee to response to the invitation. Claim 17 recites prompting the user to indicate whether said invitee may forward said invitation to other people. Claims 20 and 23 recite providing an event summary (or report) web page for the user to select previously planned events, and generating and transmitting event summary (or report) information for the selected event. Claim 21 recite said invitation Web page provides an invitation response graphical user interface enabling said invitee to select “maybe” as an RSVP status response. Claim 67 recites generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being publicly-accessible via the network to a plurality of viewers comprising the invitee and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the invitee to

respond to the invitation; receiving input provided by the invitee via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the invitee indicating the RSVP status information. The support for the group rejection provided by the Examiner is a “Home Page 350” in Rasansky, which is not applicable to claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67. The Examiner also failed to discuss, or even mention, the distinctive claimed features of claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67. Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67 is improper and request its withdrawal.

In addition, Applicants submit that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not find the elements of claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67 obvious in view of the Rasansky and Leukemia Society references. The “Home Page 350” in Rasansky cited by the Examiner is merely a regular membership login page. See Rasansky, col. 13, lines 6-9 (“If the end user accesses Appointnet through the transport medium 30 he will encounter the home page of the Appointnet web site 350. From this home page, end users can choose to go further and sign in 360.”).

The Home Page 350 and related sections in Rasansky fail to teach or suggest (1) the following limitations recited in claim 3: generating an invitation web page based on event information input by user, and sending an invitation message to an invitee prompting the invitee to view the invitation web page, the web page enables the invitee to response to the invitation; (2) the following limitations recited in claim 17: “prompting the user to indicate whether said invitee may forward said invitation to other people;” (3) the following limitations recited in claims 20 and 23: providing an event summary (or report) web page for the user to select previously planned events, and generating and transmitting event summary (or report) information for the selected event; (4) the following limitations recited in claim 21: “said invitation Web page provides an invitation response graphical user interface enabling said invitee to select ‘maybe’ as an said RSVP status response;” and (5) the following limitations

recited in claim 67: “generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being publicly-accessible via the network to a plurality of viewers comprising the invitee and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the invitee to respond to the invitation; receiving input provided by the invitee via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the invitee indicating the RSVP status information.”

Appellants further submit that the rest of the Rasansky reference and the Leukemia Society reference also do not teach or suggest the above discussed additional limitations in the claims. The combination of the Rasansky and Leukemia Society references also fails to disclose or suggest the claimed features recited in claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67. Accordingly, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not find the elements of dependent claims 3, 17, 20, 21, 23, and 67 obvious in view of the cited references.

C. Claims 12, 13, 22, and 24 are patentable over Rasansky in view of Leukemia Society.

The Examiner improperly rejected claims 12, 13, and 24 by grouping them together with the independent claims without addressing their distinctive claimed features. “A plurality of claims should never be grouped together in a common rejection, unless that rejection is equally applicable to all claims in the group.” MPEP 707.07(d). In addition, the Examiner “bears the initial burden of factually supporting any prima facie conclusion of obviousness.” See MPEP 2142. Dependent claims 12, 13, and 22 recite additional limitations that are not included in the independent claims and not taught or suggested in the cited references. Specifically, claim 12 recites prompting the user to specify a question for the invitee, and that the invitation web page enables the invitee to provide a response to the question, claim 13 recites “said invitation Web page is further operative to enable other invitees to view said response if the user has selected an

option of enabling said other invitees to view said response,” and claim 22 recites “said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to specify a maximum number of invitees.” The Examiner rejected claims 12, 13, and 22 without discussing, or even mentioning, their claimed features. Therefore, Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 12, 13, and 22 is improper and request its withdrawal.

In addition, the Examiner improperly rejected claim 24 by failing to providing any support for the rejection. Similar to dependent claims 12, 13, and 22, dependent claim 24 also recite additional limitations not taught or suggested in the cited references. Specifically, dependent claim 24 recites providing an event report web page for the user to select previously planned events, and generating and transmitting event report information for the selected event. The Office Action did not cite any particular portions of the Rasansky reference and the Leukemia Society reference, nor did it explain the pertinence of the Rasansky and Leukemia Society references to claim 24. This is required by MPEP 707.5, which states: “During the examination of an application or reexamination of a patent, the examiner should cite appropriate prior art which is nearest to the subject matter defined in the claims. When such prior art is cited, its pertinence should be explained.” Accordingly, Appellants respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 24 is improper and request its withdrawal.

In addition, Applicants submit that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not find the elements of claims 12, 13, 22, and 24 obvious in view of the Rasansky and Leukemia Society references. The Rasansky and Leukemia Society references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose the claimed features recited in claims 12, 13, 22, and 24. Therefore, Appellants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 12, 13, 22, and 24 are improper request its withdrawal.

D. Official Notices in the Rejections of Claims 6, 8, 10, 14-16, 18, 19, and 64 are Improper.

The Examiner rejected dependent claims 6, 8, 10, 14-16, 18, 19, and 64 under 35 USC 103(a) in view of Rasansky, Leukemia Society, and Official Notice. Appellants respectfully submit that the finding of Official Notice is improper.

The Examiner introduced the current version of the Official Notice-based rejections of these claims in an Office Action mailed on December 8, 2006. Appellants timely challenged the findings of Official Notice in a response filed on April 5, 2007 and requested that the Examiner provide adequate documentary evidence in support of the rejection as required by MPEP 2144.03C. Appellants' position at the time was¹, and remains, that the law restricts the use of Official Notice to only notice of facts that are "capable of such instant an unquestionable demonstration as to defy dispute." *In re Ahlert*, 424 F.2d 1088, 1091 (CCPA 1970). The dependent claims involve details of event planning systems, and such details are not capable of instant and unquestionable demonstration as being well known before the priority date of the present application. The relevant time period occurred almost 9 years ago, and one cannot simply step back in time and assert that these aspects of the claimed invention are well-known without documentary support.

In response, the Examiner stated:

While applicant may challenge the examiner's use of Official Notice, applicant needs to provide a proper challenge that would at least cast reasonable doubt on the fact taken notice of. See MPEP 2144.03 where *In re Boon* is mentioned.

Office Action, p. 7. Thus, the Examiner's response to Appellants' argument is essentially a vague statement alleging that the challenge was improper followed by an ambiguous cite to a

¹ The bulk of Appellants' argument in the April 5, 2007 response was directed to the challenging the Official Notice-based rejection of the independent claims. It is clear from context that the rejection of the dependent claims was challenged for the same reasons.

case that is no longer referenced in MPEP 2144.03. Accordingly, Appellants submit that the rejection of claims 6, 8, 10, 14-16, 18, 19, and 64 lacks substantial evidential support and is improper. See *In re Zurko*, 258 F.3d 1379, 1385 (Fed. Cir. 2001).

For the foregoing reasons, Appellants submit that the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-25 and 52-68 is erroneous, and respectfully request reversal.

Respectfully submitted,
JUSTIN T. NGUYEN ET AL.

Dated: January 31, 2008

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VIII. Claims Appendix

The claims involved in the instant appeal are as follows:

1. An event planning process executed by a server system in a computer network including a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via the network, the process comprising the steps of:
 - providing an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event;
 - receiving event information input by the user, said event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to said scheduled event and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend said scheduled event;
 - providing an invitation to said invitee, said invitation indicating said scheduled event and said RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to said invitation, wherein an affirmative response to said invitation requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees;
 - receiving RSVP status information including payment information from said invitee; and
 - verifying said payment information.
2. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes generating at least one event planning Web page that is accessible at the user terminal via the network, said event planning Web page including embedded code for providing said event planning graphical user interface.
3. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said steps of providing an invitation to said invitee and receiving RSVP status information further comprise:
 - generating an invitation Web page based on said event information, said invitation Web page being accessible via the network and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling said invitee to respond to said invitation;

sending an invitation message to said invitee, said invitation message prompting said invitee to view said invitation Web page; and
receiving input provided by said invitee via said invitation Web page, said input provided by said invitee indicating said RSVP status information.

4. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending an Email message via the network to said invitee at a second user terminal, said Email invitation including a link to said invitation Web page.

5. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein the server system is communicatively coupled with a telephone system, and wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending a fax invitation message to said invitee via said telephone system, said fax invitation including a universal resource locator for accessing said invitation Web page via the network.

6. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending a post card to said invitee, said post card providing a universal resource locator for accessing said invitation Web page via the network.

7. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein the server system is communicatively coupled with an interactive voice response system that is connected to a telephone system, said interactive voice response system being configured to enable said invitee to provide said RSVP status information in response to said invitation, and wherein said RSVP status information is received at the server system via said interactive voice response system.

8. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein:
said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal comprises a step of providing a plurality of invitation templates each being associated with a different type of event and having at least one associated graphical image;

said step of receiving event information includes receiving information indicative of a selected one of said templates; and

said step of generating an invitation Web page includes generating an invitation Web page based on said selected template, said invitation Web page displaying said associated graphical image.

9. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein:

said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal comprises providing access to an address book associated with the user, said address book comprising a list of contacts and associated contract addresses;

said step of receiving event information comprises receiving information indicative of selected ones of said contacts; and

said step of providing an invitation comprises providing invitations to said selected contacts.

10. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to indicate whether said scheduled event is to be listed in a public events directory, and wherein said event information indicates whether said scheduled event is to be listed in the public events directory, and further comprising the step of:

if said event information indicates that said scheduled event is to be listed in the public events directory, providing a link, to said invitation Web page from a Web page that is accessible via the network, said invitation Web page allowing anyone who accesses said invitation Web page to RSVP for said scheduled event.

11. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to indicate a schedule for sending reminders to invited guests, and further comprising the step of sending reminder messages to said invitees in accordance with said schedule.

12. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein:
said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to specify a question for said invitee;
said event information specifies said question;
said invitation Web page is further operative to provide invitation response graphical user interface components enabling said invitee to provide a response to said question; and
said step of receiving input comprises receiving information indicative of said response.
13. An event planning process as recited in claim 12 wherein said invitation Web page is further operative to enable other invitees to view said response if the user has selected an option of enabling said other invitees to view said response.
14. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said invitation Web page is further operative to enable said invitee to view RSVP status information associated with each of said other invitees.
15. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein invitees may post messages and comments regarding the event on said invitation Web page.
16. An event planning process as recited in claim 15 wherein said user may specify that all of said posted messages and comments may be viewed only by said user.
17. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to indicate whether said invitee may forward said invitation to other people.
18. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to indicate ticket pricing information indicating a price of at least one type of ticket being offered for admission to said

scheduled event, and further comprising a step of determining convenience fees to be paid to administrators of the server system based on sales of said tickets to said invitees.

19. An event planning process as recited in claim 18 wherein said event information provided by said user indicates whether said convenience fees are to be paid from proceeds of ticket sales, or whether said convenience fees are to be passed on to said invitees.

20. An event planning process as recited in claim 2 further comprising the steps, of:
providing an event summary Web page to the user terminal, the event summary Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;
receiving user input from said user via said event summary Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;
generating event summary information associated with the selected event, said event summary information comprising RSVP status information associated with each of the invitees for selected event; and
transmitting said event summary information to said user terminal.

21. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said invitation Web page provides an invitation response graphical user interface enabling said invitee to select "maybe" as an said RSVP status response.

22. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface comprises prompting the user to specify a maximum number of invitees.

23. An event planning process as recited in claim 2 further comprising the steps of:
providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;
receiving user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;

generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information comprising RSVP fee status information associated with each of the invitees for said selected event; and transmitting said event report information to said user terminal.

24. An event planning process as recited in claim 18 further comprising the steps of: providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event; receiving user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events; generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information comprising RSVP fee status information and convenience fee information associated with said selected event; and transmitting said event report information to said user terminal.

25. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein each of said invitees is a member of an organization.

52. The event planning process of claim 1, wherein the step of verifying said payment information comprises linking to a payment processor system to verify the payment information.

53. The event planning process of claim 52, wherein said payment information comprises credit card information and the step of linking to a payment processor system comprises providing the payment information to the payment processor in order to initiate a credit card transaction.

54. The event planning process of claim 1, further comprising storing RSVP status information for said invitee in a database.

55. The event planning process of claim 54, wherein the database is configured to store information about a plurality of scheduled events and RSVP status information about each of the plurality of scheduled events.

56. The event planning process of claim 54, wherein the database is configured to store information about a plurality of options associated with a scheduled event and RSVP status information associated with each of the plurality of options.

57. The event planning process of claim 56, wherein the plurality of options comprises one of: payment options, ticket category options, and options for receiving an invitee response.

58. The event planning process of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of RSVP fees associated with one of: an invitee status and a selection by the invitee of an option associated with the scheduled event.

59. The event planning process of claim 58, wherein the invitee status comprises a membership status.

60. A computer program product, the computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having stored therein computer-executable instructions for performing the steps of:

providing an event planning graphical user interface, the interface configured to receive information associated with an event;

receiving event information specifying an event, at least one invitee to be invited to the event, and RSVP fee information specifying a fee required to attend the event;

electronically storing the event information in a database;

electronically providing an invitation to the invitee that comprises the event information and RSVP fee information and solicits a response to the invitation, an affirmative response to the invitation requiring a payment responsive to the RSVP fee information ;

electronically receiving a response to the invitation from the invitee comprising payment information; and

electronically providing the payment information to a payment processing server for verification.

61. The computer program product of claim 60, wherein the event planning graphical user interface comprises a portion for receiving the RSVP fee information.

62. The computer program product of claim 60, wherein the portion comprises one of: a button, a check box, a text box, and a menu.

63. The computer program product of claim 60, wherein the event planning graphical user interface comprises at least one graphical component for specifying ticketing information, the ticketing information comprising one of: ticket category information, ticket price information, and ticket discount information.

64. The computer program product of claim 63, wherein the ticket discount information is associated with one of: a membership discount and an early response discount.

65. The computer program product of claim 60, further comprising instructions encoded on the media for linking to a payment processor system to verify the payment information.

66. The computer program product of claim 60, wherein said payment information comprises credit card information and the step of linking to a payment processor system comprises providing the payment information to the payment processor in order to initiate a credit card transaction.

67. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein the steps of providing an invitation to the invitee and receiving RSVP status information further comprise:
generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being publicly-accessible via the network to a plurality of viewers comprising the invitee and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the invitee to respond to the invitation;

receiving input provided by the invitee via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the invitee indicating the RSVP status information.

68. An event planning process executed by a server system in a computer network including a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via the network, the process comprising the steps of:

providing an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event;

receiving event information input by the user, the event information indicating a scheduled event and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend the scheduled event;

generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being publicly-accessible via the network to a plurality of viewers including a first viewer and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the first viewer to respond to the invitation;

receiving input provided by the first viewer via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the first viewer indicating the RSVP status information comprising payment information; and

verifying the payment information.

IX. Evidence Appendix

No evidence of the types described in 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(1)(ix) has been submitted during prosecution of the present application.

X. Related Proceedings Appendix

To the best knowledge of Appellants and Appellants' legal representative, there are no decisions rendered by a court or the Board that may directly affect, be affected by, or have a bearing on the decision of the Board in the instant appeal.